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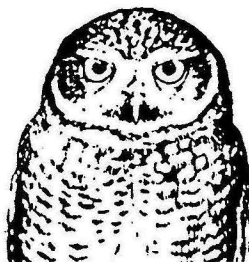
# *Nebraska Bird Review*

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## BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE SIGHTINGS IN NEBRASKA

Big Bend Audubon Society and others, Kearney: Bald Eagles.

The observations were made on January 4, 1992, and there were 19 observers, 11 for Kearney to Lexington and return, and 8 for Harlan Reservoir and the Republican River. George Brown was the recorder. The following data were obtained:

	<u>Adult</u>	<u>Immature</u>	<u>Unclassified</u>	<u>Total</u>
Harlan Reservoir and Republican River	70	68	4	142
Kearney to Lexington and return	93	7	4	104
Totals	163	75	8	246

Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District: Bald Eagles.

The report, submitted by Mark Peyton, Roger Knaggs, and Rita Robinson, includes data from eagle viewing centers at the J-2 Hydropower plant south of Lexington, and on Lake Ogallala below Kingsley Dam. Daily counts were made at the J-2 Center at 8:00 a.m. CST, and at the Kingsley Dam at 7:00 a.m. MST during January and February, 1992. These centers are open from mid-December to March 1, and photography blinds are available upon request. A total of 3,622 people came to the two centers during the 1991-1992 viewing season. For reservations, which are required, contact Jay Maher, Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, Holdrege, NE 68949.

The daily average of 8 bald eagles (based on a total of 291 birds over a 38-day period) at the J-2 Center compares with 11 per day in 1991. The 1992 numbers were more consistent on a day-to-day basis, and the eagles stayed in the area about two weeks longer. The daily average of 21 birds at Kingsley Dam (based on a total of 938 birds over 44 days) was markedly less than the average of 42 eagles per day in 1991. However, during February, 1992, use of the area for feeding and roosting was 161% greater than in 1991.

The data are given in the table on page 53.

National Wildlife Federation: Bald and Golden Eagles.

The 1992 Midwinter Eagle Survey (Jan. 1-15) in Nebraska, coordinated and submitted by John Dinan, produced a total of 1292 bald eagles, including 339 observed along the Missouri River, and 15 golden eagles. The bald eagle count is 176 birds above the previously recorded high of 1116 eagles in 1989, and 416 more than the past five-year average of 876 eagles. Eagle use of the Harlan County Reservoir area was well above average, but uses of the Sutherland Reservoir area, Lake McConaughy, and the Platte Valley from Darr to Elm Creek were all below normal during the survey period. The Missouri River showed a 93% increase over the past five-year average.

Eagles were in good numbers across the state because of the open conditions and the large numbers of overwintering waterfowl.

(continued on page 54)

Numbers of bald eagles at two viewing sites in 1992. Data supplied by Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District.

Date	J-2 Hydropower Plant near Lexington		Lake Ogallala below Kingsley Dam	
	Jan 1992	Feb 1992	Jan 1992	Feb 1992
1	NA*	NA	3	NA
2	20	NA	4	NA
3	NA	NA	5	9
4	8	NA	13	14
5	11	NA	9	16
6	5	NA	11	19
7	6	4	4	NA
8	6	2	2	NA
9	NA	1	8	NA
10	NA	1	12	22
11	8	6	7	8
12	14	2	9	43
13	16	NA	15	53
14	12	NA	14	NA
15	14	1	25	NA
16	6	1	24	NA
17	15	2	NA	19
18	13	2	NA	33
19	10	NA	NA	17
20	12	NA	17	19
21	12	NA	12	75
22	NA	0	12	NA
23	9	1	13	62
24	12	2	19	86
25	17	1	NA	43
26	16	2	NA	38
27	14	NA	14	12
28	7	NA	17	17
29	NA	NA	30	NA
30	NA	--	34	--
31	NA	--	NA	--

\* = not available.

TOTALS	263	28	333	605
DAILY AVG.	11	2	13	32

National Wildlife Federation: Bald and Golden Eagles (cont'd from p. 52).

Fish die-offs (primarily shad or alewife) at several reservoirs concentrated large numbers of eagles during (at Harlan County Reservoir) and after (at Lake McConaughy, Lake Ogallala, and Branched Oak Lake) the survey period.

Table 1. Golden eagle numbers in Nebraska, January, 1992.  
National Wildlife Federation survey.

Location	Adults	Immatures	Total
North Platte River, Bayard-Lisco	1	0	1
Middle Loup River, Thedford-Milburn	1	0	1
North Loup River, Brewster-Burwell	0	1	1
Missouri River, Gavins Point-Goat Island	2	0	2
Beaver Creek	1	0	1
Niobrara River, South of Hays Springs	1	0	1
18 mi.south of Rushville	1	0	1
3 mi. south, 2 mi. west of Rushville	1	0	1
5 mi. south, 1 mi. east of Hays Springs	1	1	2
13 mi. north, 3 mi. west of Chadron	0	1	1
9.5 mi. south of Lamar	1	0	1
Cedar River-Ericson	2	0	2
Totals	12	3	15

The bald eagle data are given in Table 2 on pages 55 - 59.

Table 2. Bald eagle numbers in Nebraska, January, 1992 (National Wildlife Federation survey). Imm. = immature, Unkn. = unknown.

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
<b>NORTH PLATTE RIVER TOTALS</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>49</b>
Wyoming Line-Bayard (and area lakes)	3	0	8	11
Bayard-Lisco	3	0	0	3
Lisco-Lewellen	13	7	0	20
Lewellen-Keystone (L. Mac, Ogallala, Clear Cr.)	7	4	0	11
Keystone-Paxton	1	1	0	2
Paxton-North Platte (to CNPPID diversion)	2	0	0	2
<b>SOUTH PLATTE RIVER TOTALS</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>
Colorado Line-Big Springs	0	0	0	0
Big Springs-Paxton	1	0	0	1
Paxton-North Platte (to CNPPID Diversion)	6	0	0	6
<b>PLATTE RIVER TOTALS</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>191</b>
North Platte-Gothenburg (Jeffrey Reserv., canal)	8	5	0	13
Gothenburg-Darr	3	0	0	3
Darr-Elm Creek (Johnson, Elwood, canal)	27	22	0	49
Elm Creek-Kearney	1	0	0	1
Kearney-Shelton	6	1	0	7
Shelton-Grand Isl. (Hwy 2)	8	7	0	15
Grand Island-Silver Creek	15	8	1	24
Silver Creek-Columbus	6	0	0	6
Columbus-North Bend	24	10	2	36
North Bend-Fremont	5	3	0	8
Fremont-Linoma (Rt. 6)	8	4	0	12
Linoma (Rt. 6)-Plattsmouth	11	6	0	17

Table 2 (continued)

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
REPUBLICAN RIVER TOTALS	<b>171</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>288</b>
Alma-Naponee (+ Harlan Co. Reservoir)	159	113	0	272
Naponee-Riverton	9	3	0	12
Riverton-Guide Rock	3	1	0	4
Guide Rock-Superior	0	0	0	0
MIDDLE LOUP RIVER TOTALS	<b>34</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>
Thedford-Milburn	3	0	0	3
Milburn-Co. Line Bridge	1	0	0	1
Co. Line Bridge-Arcadia	0	0	0	0
Arcadia-Boelus (includes Sherman Reserv.)	10	3	0	13
Boelus-Mouth of River	20	3	0	23
NORTH LOUP RIVER TOTALS	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
Brewster-Burwell	3	0	0	3
Burwell-North Loup	5	0	0	5
North Loup-Cotesfield	0	0	0	0
Cotesfield-Mouth of River	0	0	0	0
LOUP RIVER TOTALS	<b>31</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>
North Loup River-Palmer	5	1	0	6
Palmer-Genoa	22	3	0	25
Genoa-Mouth of River	4	2	0	6
SNAKE RIVER TOTALS	<b>27</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41</b>
Highway 97-Mouth of River (includes Merritt Res.)	27	14	0	41

Table 2 (continued)

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
<b>NIOBRARA RIVER TOTALS</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>144</b>
Snake River-Cornell	7	5	0	12
Cornell-Cherry Co. Line	4	1	0	5
Cherry Co.-Cuba (pilings)	24	4	0	28
Cuba-Newport (Hwy. 137)	28	3	0	31
Newport-Redbird/Lynch	34	5	0	39
Redbird/Lynch-River Mouth	23	6	0	29
<b>MISSOURI RIVER TOTALS</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>339</b>
NE/SD Line-Monowi	4	0	0	4
Monowi-Gavins Point Dam (includes Lewis & Clark)	7	0	0	7
Gavins Point-Goat Island	29	4	0	33
Goat Isl.-Ponca St. Park	25	0	0	25
Ponca St. Park-Homer	5	0	0	5
Homer-Decatur	8	1	0	9
Decatur-Tekamah	33	1	0	34
Tekamah-Mormon Bridge (includes Desoto Bend)	16	2	0	18
Mormon Bridge-Hwy. 275	1	0	0	1
Hwy. 275-Plattsmouth	8	1	0	9
Plattsmouth-Union	4	1	0	5
Union-Peru	14	0	0	14
Peru-Indian State Park	15	8	140	163
Indian Cave-Kansas Line	12	0	0	12



Table 2 (continued)

	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Total
OTHER LAKES, RIVERS, RESERVOIRS, ETC. TOTALS	71	31	8	110
Sutherland Reservoir	7	2	0	9
Lake Maloney	1	1	0	2
Enders Reservoir	2	7	0	9
Swanson Reservoir	14	6	8	28
Medicine Creek Reservoir	2	0	0	2
Calamus Reservoir	7	1	0	8
Lake Babcock	25	12	0	37
Walgren Lake	2	0	0	2
Beaver Creek	2	0	0	2
Valentine NW Refuge	2	0	0	2
Frenchman River	3	1	0	4
Blue Creek	4	1	0	5

Note: No bald eagles were seen at Red Willow Reservoir, Salt Valley Lakes, Lincoln City Lakes, Grove lake, Cottonwood Lake, Sidney, Mahon Ranch, Cody Park, Sac/Wilcox WMA, Schilling WMA, Sandy Creek NRD Lake, Crescent Lake NWR, Turkey Creek, Funk WPA, Twin Lakes, Maloney Canal.

	Adults	Imm.	Total
MISC. COUNTY OBSERVATIONS TOTALS (ADAMS THROUGH YORK)	33	5	38
Niobrara River. - SW Merriman	1	0	1
Niobrara R. - S. Cody	1	0	1
Niobrara R. - 14 mi.W, 2 S Merriman	0	3	3
Niobrara R. - S. Kilgore	1	0	1
Niobrara R. - 14 S, 5 E Hay Springs	1	0	1
Calamus R. - 25 mi.S Ainsworth	2	0	2
Calamus R. 16 mi. NW Almeria	1	0	1
.5 W Ainsworth	1	0	1
North Loup R. - 3 mi. W Burwell	1	1	2
Spring Cr. - 6 W mi. Scottsbluff	1	0	1

Table 2 (continued)

MISC. COUNTY OBSERVATIONS  
(ADAMS THROUGH YORK)  
(continued from page 58)

	Adults	Imm.	Totals
Buffalo Cr. - 8 W mi. Haigler	1	0	1
Republican R. - Stratton	1	0	1
Republican: Holbrook - Oxford	7	0	7
Republican: Oxford - Orleans	5	0	5
14 N, 6 E Stuart	1	0	1
Verdigree Cr. 13 NW mi. Verdigree	1	0	1
Prairie Lake - Adams County	1	0	1
Harvard Marsh - Clay County	1	0	1
Hastings Ind. Park - Adams County	1	0	1
Elkorn R. Bridge - Stanton County	2	0	2
Cedar R. - Ericson	2	1	3

Note: No eagles were observed in the following locations: Niobrara River-S Hay Springs; 18 mi. S Rushville; 3 mi. S, 2 W Rushville; 5 mi. S, 1 E Hay Springs; 13 mi. N, 3 W Chadron; 9.5 mi. S Lamar.

Table 2 summary of numbers of bald eagles in Nebraska, 1992.

Location	Adults	Imm.	Unkn.	Totals
Nebraska (except Missouri River)	653	281	19	<b>953</b>
Missouri River only	181	18	140	<b>339</b>
Grand totals	<b>834</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>1292</b>

## BALD EAGLES HATCHED IN NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Bird Review Vol. 59 (2), 1991, page 50, had a note on the hatching of a Bald Eagle in a nest along the Platte River in May, 1991. Unfortunately, the eaglet died in the summer of 1991, but two Bald Eagles were hatched in the spring of 1992 along the Loup River northwest of Grand Island. According to John Dinan and Ross Lock, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, these three birds are the first known to be hatched in Nebraska during this century. The two 1992 eaglets fledged and would be difficult to trace once they had dispersed. It was not possible to band them because of the inaccessibility of the nest.

Table 3. NWF bald eagle surveys, 1980-1992 (data compiled by Greg Wingfield).  
Ad = adults, Imm = immatures, Unkn = unknown.

Year	Nebraska (excluding Missouri River)				Missouri River				Grand Total			
	Ad	Imm	Unkn	Total	Ad	Imm	Unkn	Total	Ad	Imm	Unkn	Total
1980	279	149	0	428	9	5	0	14	288	154	0	442
1981	299	140	0	439	7	7	0	14	306	147	0	453
1982	204	120	1	325	95	29	0	124	299	149	1	449
1983	279	145	13	437	154	18	0	172	433	163	13	609
1984	271	83	6	360	44	5	0	49	315	88	6	409
1985	414	225	33	672	110	23	0	133	524	248	33	805
1986	279	127	15	421	37	4	0	41	316	131	15	462
1987	586	227	19	832	238	43	1	282	824	270	20	1114
1988	322	178	0	500	122	28	0	150	444	206	0	650
1989	607	293	7	907	139	58	12	209	746	351	19	1116
1990	416	223	7	646	157	53	1	211	573	276	8	857
1991	311	145	10	466	155	21	0	176	466	166	10	642
1992	653	281	19	953	181	18	140	339	834	299	159	1292
Avg. 1980- 92	378	180	10	568	111	24	12	147	490	204	22	715
Avg. 1987- 91	448	213	9	670	162	41	3	206	611	254	11	876
Avg. 1988- 92	462	224	9	694	151	36	31	217	613	260	39	911

## FALL 1991 AND SPRING 1992 WHOOPING CRANE REPORTS

Information on whooping crane sightings along the migration routes was summarized and distributed by the Fish and Wildlife Service Nebraska/Kansas Field Office in Grand Island. Many organizations and individuals participated in this important project. A few general comments will be made before giving details of the Nebraska sightings.

The first dates for confirmed sightings of whooping cranes on the fall, 1991 migration were August 12 in Canada (Saskatchewan) and October 8 in the United States (Nebraska); the last date was November 19 in Oklahoma. A total of 132 whooping cranes (82 adults, 42 subadults, and 8 juveniles) spent the winter of 1991-92 at Aransas. One adult was lost during the winter, but all the rest had left Aransas by April 15, 1992. The first sighting for the spring, 1992 migration was on April 8 near Dinsmore, Saskatchewan (the earliest sighting in this Canadian province since the spring of 1976). Nebraska reported 5 of the 50 confirmed sightings during the fall migration, and 13 of the 21 sightings during the spring migration.

By mid-June, 1992, 40 nests and 35 chicks had been located on the breeding grounds. Between 1977 and 1988, 132 juvenile whooping cranes were color-marked with leg bands, and 61 of these were accounted for during the winter of 1991-92. The Fish and Wildlife Service stresses the importance of observers looking for the colored leg bands as a means of providing new information on the migration patterns of these magnificent birds.

An unbanded whooping crane spent the summer of 1991 in northwestern Nebraska. The fall, 1991 and spring, 1992 Nebraska sightings of whooping cranes are given in the following tables. For information on sightings in other regions, contact Mr. Wally Jobman, Fish and Wildlife Enhancement, USFWS, NE/KS Field Office, 203 West Second Street, Grand Island, NE 68801.

Abbreviations: E = east, W = west, N = north, S = south, ad.= adults, yg.= young.

## WHOOPING CRANE SIGHTINGS IN NEBRASKA, FALL 1991

<u>Dates</u>	<u>No. cranes</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>Confirmed Sightings</u>		
7/15-10/11	1	Dawes Co., 3 mi. W of Whitney, also 3 mi. SE of Whitney. T33N, R51W, S33,34; T32N, R50W, S8,17.
10/8-10/11	1	Logan Co., 7.5 mi. W, 0.75 mi. N of Arnold. T17N, R26W, S20, NW.25.
10/20-10/21	4	Rock/Keya Paha Co., 5 mi. E, 12 mi. N of Bassett, Niobrara River. T32N, R18W, S9.

(continued on page 62)

## WHOOPING CRANE SIGHTINGS IN NEBRASKA, FALL 1991 (cont'd)

<u>Dates</u>	<u>No. cranes</u>	<u>Location</u>
10/24	2	Logan Co., 5.5 mi. S, .5 mi. E of Stapleton. T17N, R28W, S36, SW.25, SE.25.
10/22	2	Sherman Co., Middle Loup River, .5 mi. west of Rockville. T13N, R13W, S5,8.
10/22	2	Buffalo Co., 6 mi. E, 5.5 mi. S of Ravenna. T11N, R13W, S16, SW.25.
<u>Probable Sightings</u>		
10/6	4	Lincoln Co., flying over Jeffrey Reservoir.
10/20	3	Phelps Co., near Johnson WPA, 8 mi. N, 2 mi. E of Holdrege.
<u>Unconfirmed Sightings</u>		
10/2	1	Buffalo Co., 2 mi. E of Elm Creek I-80 exit.
10/20	2	Buffalo Co., flying over Ravenna.
10/22	6	Cheyenne Co., 7 mi. E, 2-3 S of Dalton.

## WHOOPING CRANE SIGHTINGS IN NEBRASKA, SPRING 1992

<u>Confirmed Sightings</u>		
4/10-12	4 ad. 1 yg.	Kearney Co., Gleason Waterfowl Production Area (WPA), 4 mi. W, 4 S of Minden. T5N, R15W, S4, NW.25; T6N, R15W, S33, SE.25.
4/13	8	Kearney Co., Gleason WPA, 4 mi. W, 4 S of Minden. T5N, R15W, S4, NW.25.
4/10	2	Buffalo Co., .5 mi. E of Gibbon bridge, Platte River. T8N, R14W, S12, NE.25.
4/10-11	4	Buffalo Co., 2 mi. W of Gibbon bridge, Platte River. T8N, R14W, S10, SE.25.
4/10-11	6	Dawson Co., .25 mi. east of Overton bridge, Platte River. T8N, R20W, S12, NE.25.
4/11	4	Lincoln Co., .25 mi. NW of Hwy 30 bridge at North Platte, North Platte River. T14N, R30W, S35, SE.25.

(continued on page 63)

## WHOOPIING CRANE SIGHTINGS IN NEBRASKA, SPRING 1992 (cont'd)

<u>Dates</u>	<u>No. cranes</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>Confirmed Sightings (cont'd)</u>		
4/13-14	4	Lincoln Co., 1.5 mi. S, 4.25 W of Wellfleet. T9N, R31W, S23, E.25, SE.25.
4/12-14	2 ad. 1 yg.	Lincoln Co., 2 mi. N of Wellfleet. T10N, R30W, S33, W.25, SE.25, S28, SW.25, NW.25.
4/11-12	2	Dawson Co., 2 mi. N, .25 E of Gothenburg. T12N, R25W, S34, NW.25.
4/14	4 ad. 1 yg.	Buffalo Co., 2.5 mi. W of Gibbon bridge, Platte River. T8N, R14W, S15, NW.25, NW.25.
4/13-14	4	Lincoln Co., 11 mi. SW of Arnold. T16N, R27W, S3, E.5.
4/15-16	4	Cherry Co., 14 mi. S, 9 W of Cody. T32N, R35W, S20, NE.25, S23; T32N, R34W, S30.
4/16	4	Thomas Co., 4 mi. W of Halsey, Middle Loup River. T23N, R26W, S32, SE.25.
<u>Probable Sightings</u>		
4/12	2	Lincoln Co., 2.5 mi. N, 3 W of North Platte.
4/13	8	Kearney Co., 4.5 mi. S, 5 E of Kearney. Flying.
5/5	1	Logan Co., Cody Lake.
<u>Unconfirmed Sightings</u>		
3/26	1	Buffalo Co., Audubon Sanctuary.
4/2	1	Brown Co., flying over Ainsworth.
4/27	3	Scotts Bluff Co., bridge crossing between Gering and Scottsbluff. Flying.

(continued on page 64)

## WHOOPING CRANE SIGHTINGS IN NEBRASKA, SPRING 1992 (cont'd)

<u>Dates</u>	<u>No. cranes</u>	<u>Location</u>
<u>Confirmed Sightings (cont'd)</u>		
4/13-14	4	Lincoln Co., 1.5 mi. S, 4.25 W of Wellfleet. T9N, R31W, S23, E.25, SE.25.
4/12-14	2 ad. 1 yg.	Lincoln Co., 2 mi. N of Wellfleet. T10N, R30W, S33, W.25, SE.25, S28, SW.25, NW.25.
4/11-12	2	Dawson Co., 2 mi. N, .25 E of Gothenburg. T12N, R25W, S34, NW.25.
4/14	4 ad. 1 yg.	Buffalo Co., 2.5 mi. W of Gibbon bridge, Platte River. T8N, R14W, S15, NW.25, NW.25.
4/13-14	4	Lincoln Co., 11 mi. SW of Arnold. T16N, R27W, S3, E.5.
4/15-16	4	Cherry Co., 14 mi. S, 9 W of Cody. T32N, R35W, S20, NE.25, S23; T32N, R34W, S30.
4/16	4	Thomas Co., 4 mi. W of Halsey, Middle Loup River. T23N, R26W, S32, SE.25.

Probable Sightings

4/12	2	Lincoln Co., 2.5 mi. N, 3 W of North Platte.
4/13	8	Kearney Co., 4.5 mi. S, 5 E of Kearney. Flying.
5/5	1	Logan Co., Cody Lake.

Unconfirmed Sightings

3/26	1	Buffalo Co., Audubon Sanctuary.
4/2	1	Brown Co., flying over Ainsworth.
4/27	3	Scotts Bluff Co., bridge crossing between Gering and Scottsbluff. Flying.

## 1990 NEBRASKA NESTING REPORTS

Compiled by Norma Johnson-Mueller and Rosalind Morris

The following summary compares records for four nesting seasons in Nebraska:

	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1990</u>
Number of counties	46	52	53	36
Number of observers	32	25	25	23
Number of agencies	2	2	2	2
Number of species	72	94	105	54

(continued on page 65)

## 1990 NEBRASKA NESTING RECORDS (continued)

The number of counties covered and the number of observers decreased in 1990 when compared with the previous three years. In 1990, only least tern and piping plover nests were recorded in 9 of the 36 counties by 4 of the 23 observers. The information on these two species is presented in Table 1. Observers included Mark Brohman, John Dinan, and Greg Wingfield ( Nebraska Game and Parks Commission), John Sidle (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Eileen Kirsch, and Jeanine Lackey.

Table 1. No. of least tern and piping plover nests initiated, 1990.

<u>County</u>	<u>Least Terns</u>	<u>Piping Plovers</u>
Keith	5	13
Lincoln	0	1
Dawson	40	5
Buffalo	26	11
Phelps	1	3
Hall	44	21
Merrick	24	3
Hamilton	8	0
Platte	6	4
Colfax	43	5
Butler	17	3
Dodge	37	4
Saunders	52	13
Douglas	47	11
Sarpy	52	10
Cass	86	26

Nesting records of other species are given in Table 2 (pages 66-69), with counties arranged from west to east, and from north to south for those on about the same longitude. Counties and contributors: Scotts Bluff, Banner, Kimball, Morrill, and Cheyenne, M. K. Clausen; Dundy, L. L. Einemann; Thomas, R. Green; Custer, R. G. Cortelyou, A. Rushton; Rock, L. Blake; Boyd, L. W. Bauman; Greeley and Hall, C. E. Johnson; Platte, M. A. Brohman; York, L. Morris; Thayer, J. Lentfer; Dixon, R. L. Johnson, J. A. Johnson; Cuming, L. L. Einemann; Saunders, J. J. Dinan, R. G. Cortelyou; Lancaster, C. L. Anderson, J. J. Dinan, L. L. Einemann, T. E. Labedz, R. G. Stutheit; Thurston, R. Klein; Johnson, R. G. Stutheit; Washington, R. G. Cortelyou, A. Rushton; Douglas, R. G. Cortelyou, C. E. Johnson, E. D. Johnson, A. Rushton; Sarpy, J. J. Dinan; Cass, C. L. Anderson; Richardson, M. K. Clausen.

The symbols used in Table 2 and their meanings are as follows: N = nest observed; NB = nest-building; CN = carrying nest material; N/A = nest with adult on it; E = eggs; N/Y = nest with young; F = adults feeding young; CF = carrying food; Y = young off nest. Numbers in parentheses refer to the number of adults, eggs, or young. More than one nest is indicated either by a comma (e.g. NB, N/A = 2 nests) or by a number in parentheses. Data were recorded on North American nest-record cards unless there is a \* by the symbols. Any counties not having any of the species listed on a page of Table 2 were not included on that page.





Table 2 (continued)

Species	Kimball	Custer	Greeley	Hall	Platte	Thayer	Dixon	Cuming	Dodge	Lan-caster	Thurs-ton	Douglas	Richard-son
Rock Dove												Y(1), F	
Mourning Dove			N/A, E(2)				NB	N/A, E(2)				N/A, Y(2)	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo								N/A, E(3)					
Common Barn-Owl	N/Y(2)				Y(5)	N/A, Y(4)					Y(5)		
Common Nighthawk									N*				
Red-headed Woodpecker		Y*					Y(2)					Y(1), F Y*	
Northern Flicker							NB					Y(2), F	
Eastern Phoebe													N/A, E(5)
Say's Phoebe	Y(2), F												
Western Kingbird												N/A, Y	
Eastern Kingbird							NB					Y(2)	
Barn Swallow				N/A									
Blue Jay										NB, N/A			CF
Black-capped Chickadee							CF			NB, Y(3)			
House Wren							NB, Y(5)					N/A, E(6), Y	

Table 2 (continued)

Species	Banner	Dundy	Thomas	York	Dixon	Cuming	Lancaster	Johnson	Washington	Douglas
Eastern Bluebird								N(6), E, Y(8)		
American Robin					N/A		NB, N		N/Y*	N/A(5), F, Y(9-10)
Gray Catbird					NB, N/A Y(3)					
Brown Thrasher										N/A*
Cedar Waxwing										N/A, Y(3)
European Starling							N/A			
Warbling Vireo										NB, N/A, F, Y(2)
Yellow Warbler					NB					
Common Yellowthroat					NB					
Blue Grosbeak			Y(1)*	E(3)*						
Dickcissel						N/Y(3)				
Chipping Sparrow									CF*	
Vesper Sparrow					N/Y(4)					
Lark Sparrow		Y(3)								
Red-winged Blackbird	Y(4), F									N/A, E(4), N/Y
Common Grackle							N/A			Y(2), F

Table 2 (concluded)

Species	Lancaster	Douglas
Orchard Oriole		NB, N/A, Y, F
Northern Oriole		Y(2), F
House Finch	CN	
Pine Siskin		NB, CN, N/A
American Goldfinch	N/A, Y(4)	

## NOTES ON BIRD SIGHTINGS

Brown Pelican in Nebraska. A BROWN PELICAN arrived at DeSoto Wildlife Refuge sometime during the last week of April, 1992, and was still there on May 8 with a flock of WHITE PELICANS. Brown Pelicans are extremely rare in Nebraska, so to have sightings in two consecutive years is very surprising.  
 --Ruth C. Green, 506 W.31 Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005

Editor's Note: NBR Vol. 59 (3), 1991, p.93, had reports of two Brown Pelicans in May, 1991, one in Dodge Co. and the other in Dakota Co.



Photo by B. J. Rose at DeSoto WR, May 6, 1992

Longspurs, Black Scoters, and Cormorants. Just after the snowstorm on April 20-21, 1992, I saw LAPLAND LONGSPURS south of Bellevue, feeding on a wind-swept patch of ground. In their midst were two CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPURS, which rarely migrate through eastern Nebraska.

On April 28, 1992, I saw two BLACK SCOTERS swimming on the Missouri River by Child's Hollow in Fontenelle Forest. I also saw DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANTS swimming on the Missouri, the first time for me to see them on a deep, swift-flowing river.

Banding Notes. I banded a WHITE-EYED VIREO in my yard on April 6, 1992. I believe this is the earliest record for Nebraska. I banded a female LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH in Fontenelle Forest on June 6, 1992. It had an active brood patch, and gave every indication of nesting. Another bird of this species was singing on territory in the area.

---Ruth C. Green, 506 W.31 Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005

Albino Birds. Several sightings of albino or partially albino birds have been reported during the past year. An albino AMERICAN ROBIN was discovered by Mark Brohman in the Maxwell Arboretum on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln East Campus July 6, 1991. He caught it so that Mabel Ott could band it, then released it at the same site. It was later found dead in the area.

Albino Birds (cont'd from p. 69)

George Brown reported that a partially albino RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD had returned during the second week in March, 1992, to the area at the junction of state routes 10 and 50A south of Kearney. He also said that an albino SANDHILL CRANE was seen in the area between Elm Creek and the Gibbon bridge during March and early April.

Ruth Green saw a partially albino AMERICAN ROBIN among a flock of 5000 south of Offut Base Lake just after the April 20-21, 1992 snowstorm. She said that the mutant robin looked as if it had been dipped in bleach, because it had large, white spots all over it.

Scott Purdy reported that an albino RED-TAILED HAWK was seen on I - 80 west of Lincoln in early spring. It was identified by Gail Foreman, Director of the Heritage Zoo, Grand Island, Nebraska.

## REACTION OF STARLINGS TO A DARK-PHASE RED-TAILED HAWK

Barbara L. Wilson, 1450 Gibson Hill Road, Albany, Oregon 97321

The role of polymorphism in bird plumage has been debated. One theory is that prey species become familiar with the common plumages of raptors and avoid them, but are unlikely to recognize unusual plumages as indicating dangerous birds (Clarke 1969). In other words, the rare plumage acts as a sort of disguise. This theory assumes that prey learn the appearance of their predators, but since prey that encounter hawks often end up dead, the opportunity for learning may be limited (Arnason 1978). An incident at Bellevue, Nebraska supports the hypothesis that an unusual color phase can act as a disguise.

As I parked at Offutt Air Force Base on April 1, 1989, I saw what I thought was a crow flying slowly toward the grassy edge of a runway and hanging there, stationary, facing into the wind. As it soared, closer examination revealed a nearly black Red-tailed Hawk. Its plumage was all very dark except that the undersides of the primaries were light toward the bases, and the tail was dark rust or brown as seen from below.

Birders are familiar with the typical reactions of starlings to a nearby hawk. They bunch closely together, and rise to circle above the hawk so that it would have difficulty catching an individual starling out of the tight cluster. The dark, threatening mass above the hawk seems to disturb it, for it usually flies away.

Interestingly, a small flock of starlings at the air base did not react to the dark Red-tailed Hawk in the normal way. They flew well separated, landed, walked a bit, flew a little further, settled, and soon took off again, but did not fly in a tight bunch, nor did they rise above the hawk. Apparently, they were reacting to what they took for a mildly disturbing crow, not to the hawk.

Though color phases may help Red-tailed Hawks to hide when hunting from perches that differ in darkness (Preston 1980), the hypothesis that unusual colors act as disguises cannot be dismissed completely.

## Literature Cited

- Arnason, E. 1978. Apostatic selection and kleptoparasitism in the Parasitic Jaeger. *Auk* 95: 377-381.  
Clarke, B. 1969. The evidence for apostatic selection. *Heredity* 24: 347-352.  
Preston, C. R. 1980. Differential perch site selection by color morphs of the Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). *Auk* 97: 782-789.

## PEREGRINE FALCON NESTING SUCCESS IN OMAHA, NEBRASKA

During May and June, 1992, there were several articles in the Omaha World-Herald on a pair of Peregrine Falcons, which chose the top of the 28-story Woodmen Tower for a nest site. The male was one of a group of chicks brought from the University of Minnesota and raised on the top of Woodmen Tower. He was released from the Tower in 1989 and has returned each year since then. In 1992 he came with a mate, who had been released from a building in Des Moines, Iowa, in 1991.

Three eggs were laid in the hack box on consecutive days between May 7 and May 9, and the three chicks hatched between June 11 and June 13. At the age of about 18 days, the chicks were banded and blood samples were taken. According to Ross Lock, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, all three fledged, and it is expected that they will return to the Omaha area next year. Their parents will likely continue to use the Woodmen Tower nest site in future years.

These three Peregrine Falcon chicks are believed to be the first to be hatched in Nebraska since the early years of this century. Dr. R. G. Cortelyou noted that J. E. Ducey, in his 1988 book, **Nebraska birds: breeding status and distribution**, has only one reference on possible Peregrine Falcon nesting in Nebraska. In this undated publication (probably around 1905), **A preliminary survey of the birds of Nebraska, with synopses**, by L. A. Bruner, R. H. Wolcott, and M. H. Swenk, the following description of the Peregrine Falcon is given:

**Falco peregrinus anatum** (Bonaparte) - Duck Hawk

A rare but regular migrant over the entire state. Lincoln, Omaha, West Point, Neligh, Dawes County. It probably breeds in this last named locality, where old and young birds were observed by Bruner Aug. 5 to 19, 1903, flying about the cliffs 8 miles west of Ft. Robinson, going in and out of a recess that may have been the nesting site.

Will they breed again on the cliffs of northwest Nebraska?

---Rosalind Morris, 3018 O Street, Lincoln, NE 68510

NEBRASKA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION WINTER MEETING, KEARNEY, NEBRASKA  
Scott Purdy, Vice President, NOU, 2222 Bellwood #104, Grand Island,  
NE 68801

About 30 people attended the meeting at the Ramada Inn on February 28 - 29 and March 1, 1992. On Friday evening, hors d'oeuvres were enjoyed while watching videos on the snowy owl, golden eagle, and identification of waterfowl.

The weather was unusually mild through the weekend, with temperatures in the 70 to 80 degree range. An early morning field trip to Rowe Sanctuary provided a fantastic show of Sandhill Cranes, geese, ducks, and Bald Eagles. Field trips were made to other birding spots on Saturday and Sunday mornings. A total of 63 species was seen in eight counties. The list of species is given at the end of this report.

There was a papers session on Saturday afternoon, with presentations by John Dinan (Nebraska Game and Parks Commission), Norma Johnson-Mueller, NOU President, Thomas Labeledz, NOU Librarian,  
(continued on page 72)

## NOU WINTER MEETING (continued)

Gary Lingle (Platte River Trust), and John Sidle (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). The papers were well received, and comments were made to have such presentations at future meetings. After the banquet on Saturday evening, Gary Lingle showed an excellent 1976 film provided by the Platte River Trust on the Whooping Cranes called "Great White Bird". The 16mm movie was made by the National Film Board of Canada, and gave a detailed account of efforts to save this species from extinction. The bird tally and door prizes closed the meeting at noon on Sunday.

In the list of species seen during the two days, the abbreviations for the counties are as follows:

B = Buffalo, C = Custer, D = Dawson, G = Gosper, H = Hall,  
HAR = Harlan, K = Kearney, P = Phelps.

American White Pelican B, HAR; Double-crested Cormorant B; Great Blue Heron B; Trumpeter Swan B; Greater White-fronted Goose B, H, P; Snow Goose B, P; Canada Goose B, H, K, P; Green-winged Teal B; Mallard B, H, K, P; Northern Pintail B, H, K; Gadwall B; American Widgeon H, K; Canvasback H; Redhead B; Ring-necked Duck H; Lesser Scaup B; Common Goldeneye H; Bufflehead H, K, P; Common Merganser B, H; Red-breasted Merganser H; Bald Eagle B, H, K, P; Northern Harrier P; Sharp-shinned Hawk B, H; Red-tailed Hawk B, H, K, P; Rough-legged Hawk B, K, P; Golden Eagle B, C, H, K, P; Prairie Falcon B, K; Ring-necked Pheasant B, P; Greater Prairie-Chicken HAR; Northern Bobwhite B; Sandhill Crane B, H, K, P; Killdeer B, H, P; Ring-billed Gull B, K, P; Rock Dove B, H, K, P; Great Horned Owl B, K, P; Belted Kingfisher B, H, P; Red-bellied Woodpecker B, H; Downy Woodpecker B, P; Hairy Woodpecker B; Northern Flicker B, H; Horned Lark P; Blue Jay B, K; Black-billed Magpie B, P; American Crow B, H, K, P; Black-capped Chickadee B, P; White-breasted Nuthatch B, P; Golden-crowned Kinglet B; Eastern Bluebird B, K; American Robin B, H, K, P; Cedar Waxwing D; Northern Shrike C, G, P; European Starling B, H, K, P; Northern Cardinal B, H, K; Rufous-sided Towhee G; American Tree Sparrow B, H, P; Harris' Sparrow G; Dark-eyed Junco B, H, K; Red-winged Blackbird B, H, K, P; Western Meadowlark B, H, K, P; House Finch B, H; Pine Siskin B; American Goldfinch B, K; House Sparrow B, H, K, P.

Editor's Note: A summary of the Annual Meeting and the minutes of the business meeting will be given in the next NBR issue.

## BOOK REVIEW

Olin Pettingill Jr. 1992. **My Way to Ornithology**. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK. 245 pages; \$24.95.

Most Nebraskans who recognize this author's name probably will remember him as a cinematographer and lecturer in the Audubon Screen Tour series. The series was a regular part of live entertainment in Lincoln and Omaha until the early 1960s.

Other bird-oriented people will know that Pettingill wrote two of the first - and still best - regional bird-finding books (detailed guidebooks to bird-finding localities in the states east and west of the Mississippi, respectively). Perhaps still others will remember him as a one-time teacher of ornithology at Carleton

(continued on page 73)

## BOOK REVIEW (continued)

College and the University of Michigan Biological Station, or as a director of the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University.

Pettingill, now retired, has written a detailed and generally interesting autobiographical account of how he literally found his way into becoming a professional ornithologist when this field scarcely existed as such.

He maintained a personal journal from an early age; thus he was able to provide a wealth of detail on his activities from childhood. This well-documented book covers only the period from the time of his birth in 1907 until 1934, when he left for Carleton to begin his first major college-teaching job.

By virtue of its great detail, I was able to determine, for example, that at the time I was born in late June, 1931, Pettingill was observing and photographing subarctic shorebirds near Churchill, Manitoba, having just completed his first year of graduate studies in ornithology at Cornell University. (About 25 years later I, too, would become a graduate student in ornithology at Cornell, and some years after that I would be spending late June studying shorebirds near Churchill.)

Pettingill provides a personal example of what the study of natural history was like in those pre-war years, when most ornithologists carried a shotgun as well as binoculars to confirm their bird records, when the first field guides were just becoming available for bird identification, and when equipment for nature photography was still extremely primitive.

In his formative years he was influenced by a few teachers, notably a high-school teacher of English, who inspired him to become a writer, and especially a professor of biology at Bowdoin College, who introduced him to field ornithology. At that time, nearly all ornithological research involved life-history studies, a kind of formalized natural history.

Together with the increasingly effective field-guide series created by Roger T. Peterson, Pettingill and a few others gradually altered bird watching in North America from a rather strange activity of a few seemingly quirky people into a major national, and increasingly even international, pastime to be enjoyed by all social classes.

Readers of this book, even if they cannot make personal associations with the many people named in it, probably can find interest and pleasure in seeing how a few pivotal model figures, appearing at a critical time, can constructively shape and give direction to a person's life.

---Paul A. Johnsgard, School of Biological Sciences,  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln 68588

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## BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

Paul R. Ehrlich, David S. Dobkin, and Darryl Wheye. 1992. **Birds in Jeopardy**. Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA 94305. 272 pages; \$17.95 paper, \$45 cloth.

This book provides an overview of the extent of declines, as  
(continued on back cover)



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BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS (continued)

well as current conditions, of each bird that is federally protected, or is recognized by the National Audubon Society to be undergoing cyclic declines, in Canada and the United States, including Hawaii and Puerto Rico. The text for each bird includes topics such as requirements for successful nesting and feeding, worldwide and North American breeding ranges, and current status of imperilment. According to Roger Tory Peterson, "This important book should be read by every nature-oriented citizen...wherever birds are in trouble, so is the land on which they and innumerable other living things depend."

Lynx Edicions, Barcelona, Spain, and the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP), are publishing a 10-volume **Handbook of the Birds of the World**. Volume 1, **Ostrich to Ducks**, will be published in September, 1992 (\$120 before September 30, 1992, then \$165, \$7 for postage and handling, ICBP, c/o WWF-US, 1250 Twenty-Fourth Street NW, Washington, DC 20037).

There will be a chapter for each family, with sections on systematics, morphology, habitat, general habits, voice, food and feeding, breeding, movements, relationship with people, status and conservation, and general bibliography. The volumes will be extensively illustrated with color plates and photographs, and distribution maps. ICBP's worldwide Conservation Program will receive part of the proceeds from the sale of the handbook.

-----Rosalind Morris, Editor